

**HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION
MAY 19, 2014
DEMOLITION AND RELOCATION PERMITS
HDP-2014-0229
606 W. JOHANNA STREET**

PROPOSAL

Demolish a ca. 1917 house.

ARCHITECTURE

One-story, rectangular-plan, pyramidal hipped-roof frame house in the Cumberland style with double front doors and a symmetrical front façade; full-width inset porch on plain, square wood posts; single 1:1 fenestration. Windows on the sides of the house have been replaced with modern vinyl windows.

RESEARCH

The house appears to have been built in 1917 for Emory J. and Jessie Scales, an African-American couple. Emory Scales had grown up in South Austin; his father, John H. Scales, was a laborer for the Austin Gas Works. Emory Scales followed in his father's footsteps – after early jobs as a brickyard laborer and a day laborer, by the time he and Jessie built this house in 1917, he was working for the Austin Gas Light Company as a laborer and gas fitter. He and Jessie lived in this house until around 1931; by 1940, the family had moved to a house on New York Avenue. Jessie Scales was a private laundress for most of her working life, even after they moved to New York Avenue; Emory Scales became a church janitor, and died in 1942.

The house was a rental unit for a short period of time in the early 1930s, then purchased by Samuel "Dink" Mays and his wife, Emma. Samuel Mays was born in Round Rock, and worked his entire working life as a laborer for the City Street and Bridge Department. Emma Mays worked as a cook in a high school. They never had any children. Emma Mays died in the 1960s; Samuel Mays died in 1969 while still living in this house. The house then became a rental unit.

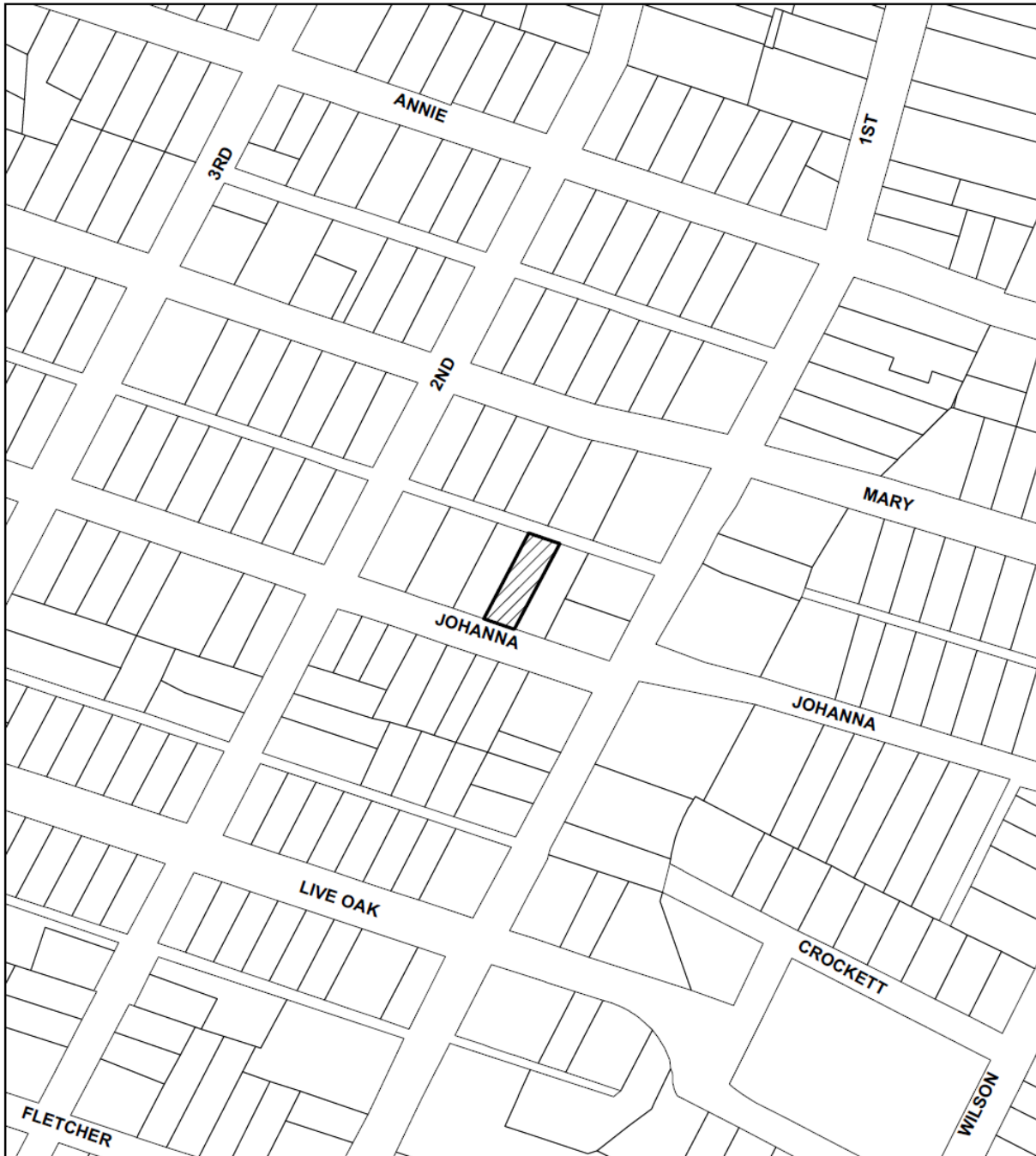
STAFF COMMENTS

The house is listed in the Comprehensive Cultural Resources Survey (1984) but without a priority for research.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Encourage relocation and re-use of this house over demolition, especially if the relocation of this house can occur in the same general neighborhood. This is a substantial house built by substantial African American families, and is one of the best properties associated with the long history of the almost completely vanished African-American community in South Austin.

LOCATION MAP



SUBJECT TRACT



PENDING CASE



ZONING BOUNDARY

1" = 200'

NOTIFICATIONS

CASE#: HDP-2014-0229

LOCATION: 606 W JOHANNA STREET

This product is for informational purposes and may not have been prepared for or be suitable for legal, engineering, or surveying purposes. It does not represent an on-the-ground survey and represents only the approximate relative location of property boundaries.

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606 West Johanna Street
ca. 1917



OCCUPANCY HISTORY 606 West Johanna Street

City Directory Research, Austin History Center
By City Historic Preservation Office
April, 2014

1992	Vacant
1985-86	Elworth and Maria Steave, renters Elworth: Driver, AISD Maria: Clerk, Wallace's Book store, 2244 Guadalupe Street.
1981	George and Ola Burse, renters Retired
1977	Ola B. Ware, renter Widow, Robert Ware No occupation listed
1973	Ola B. Ware, renter Widow, Robert Ware No occupation listed
1968	Samuel D. Mays, owner Retired
1962	Samuel D. and Emma Mays, owners No occupation listed
1959	Samuel D. and Emma Mays, owners No occupation listed
1955	Samuel D. and Erma Mays, owners Employed by the City Street and Bridge Department
1952	Samuel D. and Erma Mays, owners Laborer
1949	Samuel D. and Erma Mays, owners Laborer
1947	Samuel D. and Erma Mays, owners Laborer, City of Austin
1944-45	Samuel D. and Erma Mays, owners Laborer
1941	Samuel D. and Erma Mays, owners Laborer
1939	Samuel D. and Erma Mays, owners Laborer

- 1937 S. Dink and Erma Mays, owners
Gravel spotter, City Street and Bridge Department
- 1935 Dink Mays (not listed as owner)
Laborer, City Street and Bridge Department
- 1932-33 Oscar F. and Nollie Glasco, renters
No occupation listed
NOTE: Dink Mays is listed as a laborer for the City Street and Bridge Department; he had no residential address listed.
NOTE: Emory J. and Jessie Scales are listed at 1187 Chestnut Avenue; he had no occupation listed
- 1930-31 Emory J. and Jessie Scales (colored), owners
No occupation listed
- 1929 Emory J. and Jessie Scales (colored), owners
No occupation listed
- 1927 Emory J. and Jessie Scales (colored), owners
Laborer, Austin Gas Light Company, 907 Congress Avenue.
- 1924 Emory J. and Jessie Scales (colored), owners
No occupation listed
- 1922 Emory J. and Jessie Scales (colored), owners
Fitter, Austin Gas Light Company, 907 Congress Avenue.
- 1920 Emory J. and Jessie Scales (colored), owners
Laborer
- 1918 Emory J. and Jessie Scales (colored), owners
Laborer, Austin Gas Light Company.
- 1916 The address is not listed in the directory
NOTE: Emory Scales is listed as a laborer for the Austin Gas Light Company; he lived at 1804 1st Street in the Bouldin Addition.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES:

Emory J. and Jessie Scales (ca.1917 – ca. 1931)

The 1910 U.S. Census shows Embroy J. Scales as the 19-year old son of John H. and Emma Scales, who lived on Brackenridge Road in Austin. John H. Scales was a laborer at the gas works; Emma Scales was a laundress at home; Embroy Scales, the oldest of the children listed, was a laborer in a brick yard. Embry Joseph Scales' 1917 World War I draft registration card shows him living at this address. Scales was born July 7, 1890 at Bluff Springs, Travis County. He was a day laborer with a wife and 3 children.

The 1920 U.S. Census shows Emery and Jessie Scales as the owners of this house. Emery Scales was a 29-year old Texas-born laborer; Jessie Scales was 27, had been born in Texas, and was a laundress at home. They had 4 children: Era Lee, 8; Willmer, 6; Thurman, 4; and Cletis, 1.

By 1940, Emory (listed as Embry) and Jessie Scales owned a house at 1903 New York Avenue, which was worth \$1,200. Emory Scales was a church janitor. Jessie Scales was a laundress for a private family. They had 4 children: Wilmer, 26, a porter for a fraternity; Cletis, 21, a porter for a barber shop; Thelma, 16; and John, 13.

Emory J. Scales died April 12, 1942 in Travis County. There was no obituary in the Austin newspapers.

Samuel Dink and Emma Mays (ca. 1934 – ca. 1969)

Samuel and Emma Mays appear as the owners of this house in the 1940 U.S. Census. The house was worth \$1,500. Samuel Mays was the 52, had been born in Texas, and was a city street laborer. Emma Mays was then 40, had been born in Texas, and had no occupation listed. They had no children listed with them. The 1930 U.S. Census shows Samuel and Emma Mays living with his mother, Susie Gilford, at 307 W. Annie Street. Susie Gilford was a 60-year old Texas-born widow. Samuel Mays worked as a grader for the city street department; Emma Mays was a cook in a high school. Samuel May's World War I draft registration card shows that he was born August 30, 1888 in Round Rock, that he lived at that time at 1808 Newton Street in Austin, was married, and worked as a laborer for the City of Austin.

SAMUEL MAYS

Samuel Mays, 78, of 606 West Johanna died Wednesday in an Austin hospital. Funeral will be at 3 p.m. Sunday in Goodwill Baptist Church in Austin with Rev. L. Roberts officiating. Burial will be in Evergreen Cemetery under direction of King-Tears Funeral Home.

Survivors include two nieces, Mrs. Nellie Mae McPhaul of Austin, and Mrs. Dorothy Nell Smith of San Antonio; and three nephews, A. J. McPhaul of Austin, Samuel Wilson of Los Angeles, and Walton Wilson of Altadena, Calif.

Obituary of Samuel Mays
Austin American-Statesman, August 30, 1969

SAMUEL MAYS

Funeral for Samuel Mays will be Sunday at 3 p.m. at Goodwill Baptist Church with Rev. L. Roberts officiating.

Burial will be in Evergreen Cemetery under direction of King-Tears Mortuary, Inc.

Funeral notice for Samuel Mays
Austin American-Statesman, August 31, 1969